

● PSF-OSS: April 1945

Box 171

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OFFICE OF STRATEGIC SERVICES
WASHINGTON, D. C.

1 April 1945

Miss Grace Tully
The White House
Washington, D. C.

Dear Grace:

I think the attached memorandum
will be of interest to the President. Will
you please see that it reaches his desk.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Bill

William J. Donovan
Director

Attachment

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By Authority of CIA

007622

By DBS Date JUN 11 1973.

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OFFICE OF STRATEGIC SERVICES

WASHINGTON, D. C.

1 April 1945

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

The following triple priority dispatch has just been received from the OSS representative in Bern relating to the most recent developments in connection with the possible surrender of German Forces in Northern Italy:

"1. Wolff arrived Fasano Friday morning and immediately summoned Parrilli and Zimmer to Fasano where they spent Friday afternoon together. Zimmer was then sent here by Wolff, Parrilli remaining Fasano.

"2. Wolff endeavored contact Vietinghoff before he went to see Kesselring, but was unable to reach him.

"3. Trip to Kesselring most difficult and when he reached Kesselring's headquarters, he had already broken loose. First conversation took place only 15 km. from our advancing forces. Wolff presented his plan for Italian surrender and Kesselring

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advised him to go through with it. He, Kesselring, regretted he was not also in Italy.

"4. In a second conversation with Kesselring, latter again expressed his agreement with Wolff's plan and that he should so advise Vietinghoff, but said that on his front he could not go along (Mitmachen). Kesselring found himself largely surrounded by strangers whom he did not trust. Zimmer gained impression from Wolff Kesselring was half a prisoner (Our representative in Bern comments that no mention was made of Westphal).

"5. Immediately on his return, Wolff had tried to reach Glazier but he was on an inspection trip at the front and was returning to his headquarters only night of 31. Wolff proposed to see him immediately and would spend Sunday with him. Wolff gave this message to Zimmer for our representative in Bern: I am ready to come to a final conversation in order to arrange matters. I hope to come with Rahn, Dollman and either Vietinghoff or a staff officer.

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"6. Rahn had been called back to Germany but avoided the trip by alleging serious strike conditions North Italy which he had to handle. Harster did return Germany, but apparently on account of a row with Gauleiter Hofer of the Tyrol. Neither summons believed to be connected with the main subject in question.

"7. While in Germany and one of the reasons for delay, Wolff was summoned by Himmler, who asked him to explain his surrender of British agent. Wolff replied that he was arranging an exchange and he wanted to give the Fuehrer Wuensche as birthday present. Himmler also accused him of having been in Switzerland and asked the reasons. Wolff answered that he had a contact in Milan who promised to bring him in touch with Allies and that he was acting pursuant Fuehrer's recent secret order to seek any possible contact with Allies. Wolff had heard that many efforts had failed and wanted to see what he could do. Himmler ordered Wolff to wait around for couple of days as he wanted to think the matter over.

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However, Himmler was suddenly called urgently to Hungary and referred Wolff to Kaltenbrunner. Himmler told him that he should not leave Italy and particularly that he should not go to Switzerland. Wolff did not see Kaltenbrunner but left for Italy.

"8. In his conversation with Kesselring, latter said to Wolff our situation is desperate, nobody dares tell truth to Fuehrer who surrounded by small group of advisers who still believe in a last specific secret weapon which they call 'Verzweiflungs' weapon. Kesselring believed this weapon can prolong war but not decide it, but might cause terrible blood bath on both sides. Kesselring said if Fuehrer gave him order to use weapon he would surrender his command. End of Zimmer report.

"9. Under foregoing program and assuming no further delays which may be inherent in situation, Wolff should come to a meeting sometime Monday or early Tuesday. Any action by Kesselring via Wolff seems excluded. Whether Wolff will win over Vietinghoff is still matter of conjecture, despite Wolff's apparent optimism.

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Zimmer understands Wolff has support of one of Vietinghoff's chief subordinates."

Donovan

William J. Donovan
Director

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WASHINGTON, D. C.

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4 April 1945

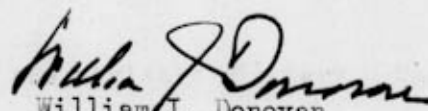
Miss Grace Tully
The White House
Washington, D. C.

Dear Grace:

I think the attached memorandum will be of interest to the President. Will you please see that it reaches his desk.

Thank you.

Sincerely,


William J. Donovan
Director

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3 April 1945

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

1. We have been making a study of German control in the countries they occupied together with the means employed against the Germans by the resistance groups in occupied territory. The purpose of this inquiry is to estimate the possible methods of control evasion that may be employed by the Germans against us.

We are conducting this study by means of interviews with resistance leaders of the various countries, examination of available records, and questionnaires sent to officials of the former Vichy Government thoroughly acquainted with German control procedure. Following are some conclusions which we have reached to date:

(a) German control in France was strictly military. The Armistice created Supreme Control Commission which was responsible to High Command. Under this commission originally were commissions for control of Army, Air, Navy, Industry, Repatriation. Under them were a myriad of sub-commissions, detachments, etc. As time went on new commissions developed for press, radio, transportation, etc.

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Throughout the occupation, France was considered to be in state of siege and therefore military could intervene directly at any time to enforce, impose or change laws. All laws were subject to instant change by so much as a simple note. Any order from the military had force of law immediately and urgently.

However, apart from occasional police measures, and isolated actions such as the sudden demobilization of the Armistice Army in November 1942, the German policy was to refrain from imposing authority directly. In government administration, military and economic affairs, the French were given directives or orders at the top, and execution was left to them. There was a highly organized system of inspection, and failure to execute instructions, when detected, brought prompt and severe punishment, but again, rarely by direct intervention, but rather through French channels.

The German system worked extremely well on short term basis; i.e., they obtained a maximum of collaboration expectable with minimum of effort. For their long term planning, which counted on France as a permanent, willing, de-industrialized, agricultural partner in the new European order, the German method was well conceived and might have succeeded.

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But in view of events as they materialized, mainly her failure to win unchallenged mastery of Europe, Germany's method of control must be considered a failure. It did not win over the French. It did permit the growth of highly developed and formidable resistance.

The fatal weakness of the system was its failure to have German officials either occupying key points of operational control or sharing these positions as opposite numbers to French officials, instead of being content merely with a policy of inspection. The French for a long time were able to prevent and delay the expropriation of railroad rolling stock simply because there were no German officials at posts of control in the administration of the railroads. Several of the most vital meetings of the top Maquis leaders were actually held in the Headquarters of 1 Prefect, with official transportation of the Prefecture taking the leaders to and from the meetings. A German general responsible for that Prefecture was located a few hundred yards away but because he exercised no direct control, had no knowledge of what was taking place. Those are but 2 of thousands of examples.

(b) French evasion of occupational control was eminently successful, due in large part to errors of the system of control.

The heart and brains of French resistance were made up of officers
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of French Army. First cardinal error of the Germans lay in permitting existence of Armistice Army of 100,000 in Metropolitan France and continuance of army of 110,000 in North Africa and the Middle East, and formation of para-military associations. Resistance inside France, although negative in character at the start, began immediately after Armistice. Because of faulty supervision French were able to conceal large quantities of arms and munitions during demobilization. Army vehicles by thousands took on new coats of paint overnight and ostensibly became property of municipal services or even private industry. Great caches of arms were formed. Armistice Army became elite organization while tens of thousands of demobilized key personnel of engineers, ordnance, communications, etc. went into civilian clothes and jobs but maintained organization and contact. 40,000 colonial troops were formed into work battalions but under demobilized cadres of their old NCO'S and officers. The Chantier De Jeunesse, Work Services, Services for the Maintenance of Order, and other youth organizations were formed and received all discipline and military training possible without arms. Regimental and other veterans associations were formed. The old statistical bureaus of Napoleon 3rd were reorganized and under this innocent guise became a recruiting system. In November 1942, the Armistice

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Army was dissolved. In 1943 the Germans began to crack down on all para-military organizations, and recruit membership for forced labor, but the harm already had been done and many of these groups went over as organized units to the Maquis. As resistance developed and became more active, these organizations were the manpower source for all forms of resistance from intelligence agents, to industrial saboteurs, to the secret army itself.

2. These comments are the unanimous conclusions of resistance leaders interviewed:

(a) No army or military organization of any sort should be permitted to remain in Germany. No youths, social or military, associations.

(b) German money should be outlawed at once and a new currency issued. This would facilitate prevention of secret financing of resistance movements. This is considered a most important step. Leaders here agree no serious resistance movement is remotely possible without large scale financial aid. Maintenance even of Maquis was estimated at 800 Francs per man per month. Greatest nightmare of French resistance leaders toward end was that money might be changed.

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(c) Immediate, complete census in Germany and issuance of new type identity card, possibly with secret serial number, first digit for example indicating first letter of name of holder, second number indicating province of origin, third number occupational category, etc. This system was started toward end in one vicinity in France, and put mortal fear in hearts resistance leaders, for it would have rendered making of false documents almost impossible, and would have paralyzed movement.

(d) Accept as principle from start that no German governing authority is to be trusted, no matter how friendly appearances may be. Have Allied representative as opposite number to German in every key point of administrative or economic control, with his countersignature necessary for any action, in some places create complete break in chain of command. As arbitrary example, have Allied office, without any German representation, at head of each Wehrkreiss so that communications between central government and lower echelons would pass through exclusive Allied control.

(e) Hunt down German officers, obtain all promotion lists of last 10 years. Maintain strictest surveillance over them or even send them out of Germany.

(f) Requisition all forms of transportation, from railroads to vehicles, and place under control of Allied officers wearing

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(g) Demobilize Army with all possible speed and make swiftest possible inventories of arms and materiel before they can be concealed.

(h) Maintain closest liaison between different spheres of Allied occupation and strive for uniformity of control laws. Line of Demarcation in France was bad mistake on part of Germans, resulting in migrations of people and material to most favored zone and considerable frustration of German aims, especially in requisitioning.

(i) Use iron fist in propaganda from start. Execute promptly and ruthlessly for falsified papers and give wide publicity to executions.

(j) Control Commissions should be well staffed, with plenty of technicians, particularly at the start. Do not discuss, but order. Avoid use of German Liaison Officers wherever possible. French Liaison Officers were star silent saboteurs.

(k) No communication should be permitted between regions in Germany during demobilization and disarmament.

William J. Donovan

William J. Donovan
Director

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OFFICE OF STRATEGIC SERVICES
WASHINGTON, D. C.

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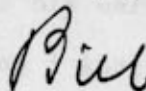
4 April 1945

Miss Grace Tully
The White House

Dear Grace:

I believe the President will be interested in the enclosed message from our representative in Bern. Will you kindly see that it reaches his desk?
Thank you.

Sincerely yours,



William J. Donovan
Director

Enclosure.

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OFFICE OF STRATEGIC SERVICES
WASHINGTON, D. C.

4 April 1945

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MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT:

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By DBS Date JUN 11 1973

The following information, transmitted by the OSS representative in Bern, is a sequel to previous memoranda concerning the possible surrender of German forces in North Italy:

An Italian emissary, Parrilli, arrived in Switzerland on 3 April with the following report from Obergruppenfuehrer and General der Waffen SS Karl Wolff, who is currently at his headquarters in Fasano:

Himmler has returned to his German headquarters from his urgent trip to Hungary, and on 1 April peremptorily ordered Wolff by telephone under no conditions to leave North Italy. Himmler told Wolff that he would telephone him periodically. Himmler chided Wolff for having moved his family to the vicinity of Brenner, and declared that he had moved Wolff's family at once back to St. Wolfgang, near Salzburg, and could take "better care" of it.

Wolff is convinced that if he were now to make a false move or to leave his headquarters for Switzerland, his

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whole project for a surrender in North Italy would fail and he would be liquidated. He believes that Himmler has given special instructions that he be watched. Accordingly, he feels it is impossible for him to come to Switzerland now.

Wolff has discussed the whole surrender plan with Rudolph Rahn, the German Ambassador to the Mussolini regime in North Italy, and declares that Rahn is in full agreement. On the night of 1 April he conferred with Generaloberst Heinrich von Vietinghoff, Kesselring's successor as commander of the German forces in North Italy, and Generalleutnant Roettiger, von Vietinghoff's Chief of Staff. Wolff claims that both agreed with him, and quotes von Vietinghoff as saying that "it is nonsense to go on fighting." Wolff declares that von Vietinghoff has been instructed, in the event of a general Allied attack, to carry out a "fighting" and scorched-earth withdrawal to the Alps. Wolff reported fully to von Vietinghoff on his recent conference with Kesselring, and told him that in Kesselring's judgment the fighting on the Western Front might last ten or fifteen days longer, and that Germany is facing catastrophe.

Wolff instructed Parrilli to tell Allied representatives that, given ten more days, he and von Vietinghoff and Rahn would be able to hand over North Italy.

Parrilli has returned to Wolff's headquarters with

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a message from Allied representatives acknowledging receipt of information that Rahn and von Vietinghoff have been won over to the plan, but stating that if there is to be a military surrender, it must be effected quickly. With the approval of AFHQ representatives, the OSS representative also asked Parrilli to remind Wolff (1) that it is vital that he and von Vietinghoff prevent the destruction of North Italy as ordered by Himmler and Hitler; (2) that he (Wolff) had previously promised to restrain action against Italian partisans and to protect Allied and partisan prisoners and hostages in his hands; (3) that he (Wolff) and his associates now have a last opportunity for action and that action alone counts, and (4) that further delay would not help but might even complicate the picture, since from the "redoubt" Himmler may exercise an increasingly terroristic influence.

(The OSS representative comments that Wolff and his associates probably want to wait in the hope that complete chaos will develop in Germany, enabling them to act in Italy without serious risk to themselves and their families. The threat to Wolff may be real. In view of the time which has elapsed since the original approach from Wolff, the number of meetings which have been held relating to the surrender

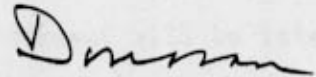
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proposal, and the number of persons who have been brought into the picture, some inkling of the plot has probably reached Himmler's ears. The OSS representative cannot predict what action Wolff and von Vietinghoff will now take, but declares that everything possible has been done to impress the Wolff group with the realities of the situation and the need to act at once.)



William J. Donovan
Director

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OFFICE OF STRATEGIC SERVICES
WASHINGTON, D. C.

6 April 1945

Miss Grace Tully
The White House
Washington, D. C.

Dear Grace:

I think the President will be
interested in the attached memorandum.
Will you please see that it reaches his
desk.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Bill

William J. Donovan
Director

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NOV 26 1973

CONFIDENTIAL

Donovan folder 2-45
file 5
CONFIDENTIAL
OFFICE OF STRATEGIC SERVICES
WASHINGTON, D. C.

6 April 1945

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

In accordance with your memorandum of April 5, I have written the heads of the various executive departments and the agencies to which you refer.

I have asked each to comment on the proposal and have suggested that, after an opportunity to study their replies, we all meet to obtain the consensus of opinion which you have requested.

I am hopeful that the meeting can be held immediately after my return, on or about April 25, from a brief trip to Europe.

W. J. Donovan

William J. Donovan
Director

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O. S. S. folder 5-45

OFFICE OF STRATEGIC SERVICES
WASHINGTON, D. C.

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6 April 1945

file 1

Miss Grace Tully
The White House

Dear Grace:

The enclosed memorandum, based on a study of our Research and Analysis Branch concerning the status of religion in the USSR, will probably be of interest to the President. Will you kindly see that it reaches his desk? Thank you.

Sincerely yours,

Bill

William J. Donovan
Director

Enclosure.

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By SR Date NOV 26 1973

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OFFICE OF STRATEGIC SERVICES
WASHINGTON, D. C.

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6 April 1945

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT:

The status of organized religion in the Soviet Union has improved considerably since the outbreak of hostilities between the USSR and Germany. The need to unify the nation in the face of the German attack, and the fact that the Russian Church and other denominations have not only ceased to attack the Soviet regime but have given it strong support during the war, appear to have brought about the change in Soviet policy toward religion. There are strong indications that this change constitutes more than a temporary expedient in time of crisis. Nevertheless, the government may attempt, after the war, to limit the growth of religion through a more active educational policy, though probably not by stronger means.

The improvement in the status of organized religion has taken place without significant changes in Soviet legislation. Freedom of worship and complete separation of church and state had been officially proclaimed at the beginning of the 1917 revolution. The constitution of 1936 freed the clergy from some of their previous disabilities and gave them legal rights equal to those of other citizens. The current relaxa-

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tion of restrictions on religious education is not the result of new legislation, but is due rather to the change in attitude of Soviet authorities. While anti-religious propaganda is still permitted by law, it was halted in September 1941 after the outbreak of Soviet-German hostilities. In January 1942₄ publicity favorable to the Orthodox Church began to appear in the Soviet press. The Soviet Government also permitted the opening of a number of closed churches and has aided in the repair and reconstruction of many churches damaged by the Germans. Numerous churchmen have been decorated for their deeds during the sieges of Leningrad and Moscow, and these awards have been highly publicized. The government has also exempted priests from military service.

The most striking indication of the new official attitude was Stalin's reception of the three leading Orthodox churchmen in the Kremlin in 1943, followed by the calling of a Council of Bishops, which elected Metropolitan Sergei as Patriarch of Moscow. Another sign of the cordial attitude of the Soviet Government is the merger of the dissident Living Church, once supported by the Kremlin against the Orthodox Church, with the latter body. The creation of a governmental Council for Affairs of the Orthodox Church is a similar indication. Al-

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though this Council doubtless serves to keep close watch over the church, it also aids the church in securing assistance from the government where this is needed. Recently a second and more impressive Orthodox Council was held in Moscow at which Metropolitan Alexei was elected to succeed the now deceased Patriarch Sergei. The elaborate setting of the Council and the presence of so many high Orthodox clergy from other countries, including two of the four Near Eastern Patriarchs and representatives of the others, clearly show that Soviet authorities plan to continue working with the church, despite the nearness of victory in the war against Germany.

For its part, the Russian Orthodox Church has supported the Soviet Government in the war. It has offered prayers for victory, made substantial donations to the Red Army and the families of service men, and has sent numerous messages of loyalty to Stalin and the Soviet regime. Although a few of the Orthodox clergy in occupied areas have collaborated with the Germans, the majority of Russian churchmen have remained loyal to the Soviet Government and have excommunicated those who sided with the invaders.

Although the Soviets officially make no distinction among religious denominations, they have obviously favored the

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Orthodox Church and, even among the non-Orthodox groups, seem to regard some with less favor than others. The Soviet Government appears to view the Catholic Church with greater disfavor than other religious groups. This is due in part to the Russian tendency to identify Catholicism with Polish nationalism and in part to papal policy which, the Russians feel, has consistently opposed the Soviet regime and has usually favored its enemies. In the Baltic states some Catholic clergy have strongly supported the Germans. Furthermore, the papal claim to supremacy in matters of faith and morals runs counter to the Soviet demand for the full allegiance of its citizens. This papal position has been strongly attacked by the Russian Orthodox Church with the support of Soviet authorities. Until recently the Catholic Church seems to have had no seminaries or other educational institutions in the Soviet Union, and the Soviet press has given it no favorable publicity. Early in 1944 the Pope stated that the position of the Catholic Church in the USSR had not changed for the better.

Within the pre-1939 boundaries of the USSR there are comparatively few Catholics. On the other hand, with the liberation of the Baltic states, the former Polish territory of western White Russia, and the western Ukraine, the number of

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Catholics has greatly increased and the position of the Catholic Church in the USSR will grow in importance. From sources hostile to the USSR have come numerous unsubstantiated accounts of the killing or exiling of Catholic clergy in Lithuania. If such acts have occurred, it seems probable that the clergy in question suffered, not because they were Catholic priests, but because they collaborated with enemies of the USSR. Recently there have been signs of a more friendly Soviet attitude toward the Catholic Church. In addition to Stalin's promise to Father Orlemanski not to persecute it, the Moscow press has reported the establishment of cordial relations with the Catholic Archbishop of Vilna. The government Council on Affairs of Religious Cults has outlined the present status of the Catholic Church in such a way that it appears to be little inferior to that of the Orthodox. It is doubtful, however, whether the Papacy will be satisfied with the amount of Catholic education allowed or with the extent of communication permitted with the Vatican.

While little is known concerning several of the less important denominations in the USSR--the Old Believers, Protestant sects, and the Jews--they have all proclaimed their loyalty to the Soviet regime during the present conflict. The Armenian Church of the USSR also has developed excellent relations with Soviet authorities, and its members, aided by

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Armenians living outside the USSR, have sent a considerable sum to Stalin for a tank column. Soviet Moslems, like other religious groups, have supported the national cause with fervent messages of loyalty to Stalin and with donations of money. The Soviet Government, in return, has permitted them to strengthen their organizations, has encouraged the reconciliation of the Shiite and Sunnite factions, and in 1944 permitted the first pilgrimages from the USSR to Mecca.

In addition to its contribution to national solidarity, current Soviet religious policy has proved advantageous to the conduct of Soviet foreign affairs. In western Europe the Soviet rapprochement with religious groups has reassured hesitating friends and has weakened the arguments of enemies. In the Orthodox lands of southeastern Europe the restoration of the Russian Orthodox Church has greatly strengthened the influence which the USSR wields by virtue of Slavic kinship and military might. Soviet political influence in the Near East has also been furthered, not only among Orthodox Christians but also among various minority religious groups, which have shown signs of turning to the Russian Church for support. Moreover, Soviet friendliness to Moslems in the USSR has doubtless impressed many Moslems abroad.

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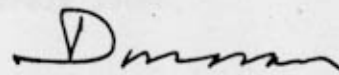
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Despite the advantages of the new Soviet religious policy and despite indications that Soviet authorities plan to continue working with religious organizations after the war, it appears probable that the USSR will attempt to limit the future growth of religion by an intensification of scientific education. More drastic measures are unlikely to be used. The majority of believers in the USSR are among the older generation and the peasantry. As the older people die and the peasants come increasingly under the influence of urban life, religion in the USSR may gradually decline.



William J. Donovan
Director

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OFFICE OF STRATEGIC SERVICES
WASHINGTON, D. C.

11 April 1945

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Miss Grace Tully
The White House

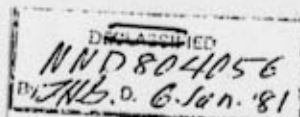
Dear Miss Tully:

Would you be good enough to place the
attached report before the President, as I believe it
will interest him.

Sincerely yours,

G. Edward Buxton
G. Edward Buxton
Acting Director

Enclosure.



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OFFICE OF STRATEGIC SERVICES

WASHINGTON, D. C.

11 April 1945

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MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT:

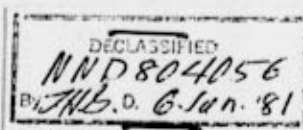
An OSS representative has transmitted the following information, reportedly sent to the Vatican on 6 April by Lorenzo Tatewaki Toda, the Apostolic Delegate in Yokohama:

Tatewaki Toda, who is a member of a Japanese princely family and related to the Emperor, proposes to call on the Emperor in order to "comfort him with the certain hope that the Holy See will not abandon its attempt at mediation" of the war in the Pacific. Tatewaki Toda believes that the present is the most favorable moment to conquer the intransigence of the extreme militarists in the interests of a peaceful solution to the war. He promises as soon as possible to send the Holy See a set of conditions which it may judge acceptable to the Anglo-Americans, and he beseeches the Pope to pray that Japan's rulers may become convinced of the necessity of an honorable peace.

G. Edward Buxton

G. Edward Buxton
Acting Director

VESSEL 84-a
Report of 9 April 1945



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